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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 76th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 173: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR RWANDA (continued) (A/48/837/Add.1)

1. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the revised cost estimate for the period from 5 April to 30 September 1994 (A/48/837/Add.1), said that both the mandate and troop strength of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) had been expanded since the establishment of the Mission. In its resolution 48/248 of 5 April 1994, the General Assembly had authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the maintenance of UNAMIR at a monthly rate not to exceed $9,082,600 gross for the period from 5 April to 31 October 1994, subject to renewal of the mandate by the Security Council, and to apportion that amount among Member States, bringing the total commitment authority granted to the Secretary-General to $62.3 billion gross. As that commitment authority did not provide for the expanded mandate and enlarged force subsequently authorized by the Security Council, the Secretary-General was submitting the report on an emergency basis in order to request an additional commitment authority that would ensure the continuation of UNAMIR activities until a full budget could be submitted in September. Annex I of the report contained a revised cost estimate which would enable the Mission to meet its immediate operational requirements for the period from 5 April to 30 September 1994, for a total of $99,549,200 gross. The additional amount requested would cover an increase in military personnel - annex III of the report contained an indicative figure of 3,205 for military personnel but as of that date, the number had already exceeded 3,327 - a special airlift of troops and of some equipment, the leasing of armoured personnel carriers, the emplacement and transportation of contingent-owned equipment and air operations.

2. In arriving at the revised cost estimate of $99.5 million, every effort had been made to minimize the additional financial resources requested by transferring surplus rations, equipment and miscellaneous supplies to UNAMIR from other missions, in particular the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM). Accordingly, the revised cost estimate reflected an increase of $37.1 million over the current commitment authority. Owing to a change in the deployment schedule and revised operational requirements, the true budget cost estimates requested by the General Assembly would be submitted in mid-September rather than at the end of August. That report would reflect the commitment authority of $37.1 million being requested and would include the revised cost estimate for the period from 5 April to 9 December 1994, when the current mandate was scheduled to end.

3. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the fact that the Fifth Committee was meeting once again illustrated a problem which would have to be addressed during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly in the context of its consideration of how to improve budgetary procedure for peace-keeping operations. The Advisory Committee was currently authorized by the General Assembly to authorize commitments of up to $10 million, under the resolution concerning unforeseen and

extraordinary expenses, in respect of any decision taken by the Security Council. The $10-million limit had been set at a time when the level of expenditures for peace-keeping operations was much smaller; the Fifth Committee would have to consider whether or not it should recommend to the General Assembly that the current limit of $10 million be revised.

4. As the Controller had indicated, the General Assembly had authorized a commitment authority of $62.3 million gross ($60.9 million net) for UNAMIR for the period from 5 April to 31 October 1994. The Secretariat had informed the General Assembly that the commitment authority for the period ending 31 October would not be made available until 30 September and that, in addition, it would require an additional commitment authority of $37.2 million gross ($38 million net), the difference between the gross and net figures being a function of reductions in the staff assessment. He had been informed that same morning that the $62.3 million was expected to be fully committed and that, as of 19 August 1994, the balance remaining under the current commitment authority was $713,216.

5. As the Controller had indicated, the bulk of the additional amount requested was needed to cover the cost of transportation, military contingents and airlifts of equipment. The request was being submitted on an emergency basis in order to ensure the functioning of UNAMIR, which had been expanded from 2,548 military personnel, including 331 military observers, to 5,500 troops to be deployed as quickly as possible. The Advisory Committee noted that the budget which the Secretary-General had been requested to submit by 31 August 1994 would be submitted in September. That was yet another example of how changing developments affected deadlines set by the Fifth Committee.

6. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the commitment authority requested by the Secretary-General should be accepted on the understanding that the full justification for the activities outlined in his report would be included in the budget document to be submitted to the General Assembly. The commitment should be entered into only after careful analysis of the requirements in order to ensure that the shortfall in the original commitment authorized by the General Assembly and assessed on Member States was truly $37.2 million. The Advisory Committee would review the commitment authority for that amount in the context of the budget submitted and would report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

7. Mr. GOKHALE (India), referring to the report of the Secretary-General, said that his delegation had consistently maintained that when equipment was transferred from one peace-keeping operation to another, the value of that equipment should be credited to the account of the operation from which the equipment was taken. The corresponding amount should be used for making reimbursements and for meeting unliquidated obligations of the operation. His delegation sincerely hoped that the report which the Secretariat had been requested to prepare on the feasibility and practicability of that methodology would be submitted during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. It also hoped that the Advisory Committee would take that into consideration in preparing recommendations on improving the administrative and budgetary aspects

(Mr. Gokhale, India)

of financing peace-keeping operations. Referring to annex II, paragraph 16 of the report, he asked whether the existing contract with UNOSOM referred to a contract with Brown and Roots, which according to the report of the Secretary-General on UNOSOM, would expire on 30 September 1994. He wondered whether that represented a conflict.

8. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) replied that the existing contract with UNOSOM did indeed refer to the contract with Brown and Roots, which had been extended so that the company could provide urgent logistical support to UNAMIR. When the contract expired international bids would be solicited and a new contract would be issued to the lowest and most qualified bidder. The Secretariat was fully aware of the General Assembly's concern about the need to improve the methodology and was taking that into account in the preparation of its report to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

9. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should adopt the following draft decision:

"The General Assembly,

"1. Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, and concurring with the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,

"2. Decides to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the amount of $37,182,100 gross ($38,043,200 net) to meet the immediate operational requirements of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda for the period from 5 April to 30 September 1994, this amount being in addition to the full commitment authority of $62,367,187 gross ($60,982,867 net) already provided by resolution 48/248 of 5 April 1994."

10. The draft decision was adopted.

11. Mr. STOCKL (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union in explanation of position after the adoption of the draft decision, said that the European Union had joined the consensus in the belief that it was necessary to follow an emergency procedure in the case of the expansion of UNAMIR. None the less, the European Union was deeply concerned about the tendency to grant the Secretary-General commitment authority for peace-keeping operations without enabling him at the same time to assess Member States, particularly where large sums were involved. That procedure had already been applied several times in recent months and if applied repeatedly, could lead to serious financial problems for the Organization.

12. The European Union had joined the consensus on the understanding that in a very short time, the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee would be reviewing the draft budget of UNAMIR, as indicated by the Secretary-General. Adoption of the draft decision should not be viewed as a call for troop-

(Mr. Stockl, Germany)

contributing countries to undertake further commitments for, unless Member States were assessed, those countries could not be reimbursed within a reasonable period of time. At the same time without willing troop contributors, there could be no real peace-keeping.

13. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) and Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) expressed full support for the explanation of position given by the representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded that stage of its consideration of agenda item 173 and requested the Rapporteur to report directly thereon to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 127: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

15. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados) said that, as it was highly unlikely that a decision would be taken during the current session of the General Assembly with regard to the establishment of an ad hoc body to study the implementation of the principle of capacity-to-pay as the fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments, consideration of the question should be deferred to early in the forty-ninth session. If a decision were taken by 15 October, the Secretary-General would still have time to establish the body by early 1995.

16. The meeting was suspended at 11.05 a.m. and resumed at 11.10 a.m.

17. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee adopt the following draft decision: "The General Assembly decides to defer consideration of the question of the establishment of an ad hoc body to study the implementation of the principle of capacity to pay as the fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments, as referred to in resolution 48/223 C, for decision at an early stage of its forty-ninth regular session".

18. The draft decision was adopted without a vote.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.